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| **Protective Vulnerable People – How Safe are our Children – 2020 Report** |
| *Information Source:* National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) website |
| NSPCC Learning recently published its annual ***How Safe are our Children?*** report, which provides findings from analysis of data from across the UK on the current child protection landscape, spread across 10 indicators, namely:  • Suicides;  • Homicides;  • Physical abuse offences;  • Sexual offences;  • Online harms;  • Child protection plans or registers and the reasons for these;  • Looked after children and young people;  • NSPCC helpline contacts; and  • Childline counselling sessions.  Focusing on statistics relating to the abuse of adolescents and overview of emerging data on the impact of Covid-19 on the safety of children and young people, findings included:  • Rates of police recorded physical, sexual and online abuse offences against adolescents are higher than rates for younger children, with the exception in some UK nations of infants under one.  • While many of the risk factors associated with abuse and neglect have been exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, support services that would have traditionally identified and responded to such concerns have been unable to see many of the children and families normally engaged with face to face.  Expert insights are also featured on:  • The adolescent brain and 'keeping safe';  • Adolescent harmful sexual behaviour; and  • Understanding and responding to 'sexting'.  Responding to the analysis, NSPCC made several recommendations for consideration by the Government, such as:  • Working with Local Authorities and schools, steps should be taken to ensure the risk of children not returning to education are minimised, given the relationship between exclusion and the risk of criminal exploitation.  • Measures should be brought forward to improve online regulation and keep children safe from online harms.  • There should be investment in Covid-19 recovery planning to provide multi-agency partnerships with the necessary resources to identify and respond to the risks children and young people have experienced during lockdown. |
| **Link:** <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/research-resources/how-safe-are-our-children> |

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| **Protective Vulnerable People–**   |  | | --- | | **The No Child Left Behind Approach to Inform Approaches to Reducing Childhood Vulnerability and Adversity** | |
| *Information Source:* Public Health England website |
| Public Health England (PHE) has published two of reports and data for Local Authorities and partner agencies to inform approaches to reducing vulnerability and adversity in childhood as follows:  **No child left behind - A public health informed approach to improving outcomes for vulnerable children**  According to PHE, by taking a public health informed approach, factors for individual children, families and communities that make it more or less likely that vulnerability and adversity in childhood would have a lasting impact on lives. It suggests taking a holistic, multi-agency approach can address inequality and the broader causes of vulnerability that might otherwise be overlooked.  This report is intended for use by leaders and practitioners at national, regional and local levels concerned with improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people. The proposed approach advocates for action across organisations to reduce vulnerability and potential harm arising from adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). This encompasses:  • Preventing such occurrences;  • Intervening early when problems arise; and  • Creating an environment throughout the life course where negative impact is mitigated.  In terms of serious violence, the document notes that at national level, PHE is supporting partners including the Home Office, Department of Health and Social Care, the police and NHS England in defining and adopting a whole system approach to prevention and is also working with partners in Violence Reduction Units to develop guidance for undertaking strategic needs assessments. Also, reference is made to an online learning package introducing ACEs early trauma being developed in the West Midlands by the PCC in partnership with local agencies including West Midlands Police and others.  Narrative reports regarding improving health outcomes for vulnerable children and young people by Local Authority area are available via an **online dashboard on the PHE website**. These reports provide summaries of data and evidence at Local Authority level in order to support decision making and prioritisation.  **No child left behind - Understanding and quantifying vulnerability**  Accompanying the other report referred to above, this document describes the:  • Extent of and nature of vulnerability in childhood;  • Evidence of increased risk and impact associated with factors at individual, family and community levels; and  • Protective factors which, where present, can mean children and young people go on to thrive, even where they may have increased vulnerability or experience adversity. |
| **Link:** <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2020/09/02/no-child-left-behind-a-public-health-informed-approach-to-improving-outcomes-for-vulnerable-children/> |

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| **Protective Vulnerable People -**   |  | | --- | | **New Report Published on Link Between School Exclusions and Child Criminal Exploitation** | |
| *Information Source:* Just for Kids Law website via NSPCC CASPAR email alert |
| Just for Kids Law and Children's Rights Alliance for England recently published a short report entitled, ***Excluded, exploited, forgotten: Childhood criminal exploitation and school exclusions***.  Based on research and casework activity by Just For Kids Law with vulnerable children, it highlighted how young people are being excluded from school for behaviour resulting from being criminally exploited.  Key points of note included:  • Over eight out of 10 children in custody within the youth justice system have been excluded from school.  • Children and young people are more vulnerable to becoming victims of criminal exploitation if they are outside mainstream education.  • Those children who have experienced such exploitation will be more vulnerable to, and disproportionately impacted by, exclusion.  • Some behaviour that leads to exclusion from school can be orchestrated by criminal actors in order to further that young person's exclusion - a significant proportion were excluded due to being groomed into criminal activity, often County Lines drug trafficking.  • There is currently no legal safeguard for young people from school exclusion linked to criminal exploitation. However, in the criminal courts there may be a legal defence to forced criminal behaviour if it resulted from exploitation. According to Just for Kids Law, this represents a worrying gap in protection that leaves children at risk of falling into the control of criminals.  Therefore, the charity is calling on schools to urgently change their approach to this issue so that their focus is always on doing everything possible to safeguard and protect pupils. Also, it recommended that the Government should change statutory guidance to reduce the risk that victims of criminal exploitation will be excluded from school and to protect the most vulnerable.  A series of case studies are also provided in the report. |
| **Link:** <https://justforkidslaw.org/what-we-do/fighting-change/campaigning/school-exclusions/excluded-exploited-forgotten-childhood-criminal-exploitation-and-school-exclusions> |

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| *Information Source:* National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC) CASPAR email alert |
| On 2 September 2020, NSPCC published the latest paper in its *Insight Briefing* series.  Using data from the Childline counselling sessions and NSPCC helpline, this latest briefing in this series included the following key findings:  • Childline saw a 22% increase in the number of counselling sessions held about physical abuse, rising from an average of 420 sessions per month before lockdown to 514 afterwards.  • Conditions created by the lockdown led to greater stress and physical conflict in some families and the rules prevented children and young people leaving home to escape physical abuse.  • Experiencing such abuse can have a long term impact on mental and emotional wellbeing and affect relationships with parents and carers.  • With regard to data from the NSPCC helpline, a 53% increase was noted in contacts from people with concerns about children experiencing physical abuse - up from an average of 696 per month before lockdown to 1,066 since then.  • In families where there has been domestic abuse, the briefing states children may also be at risk of physical abuse, e.g. non-abusive parents who have experienced domestic abuse may find it more challenging to take action to protect their child, due to possible fear of repercussions.  • Some parents and carers may threaten or manipulate children into hiding physical abuse from child protection professionals. |
| **Link:** <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/2292/impact-of-coronavirus-pandemic-on-child-welfare-physical-abuse.pdf> |

Thanks to WYP On The Horizon Team